REST

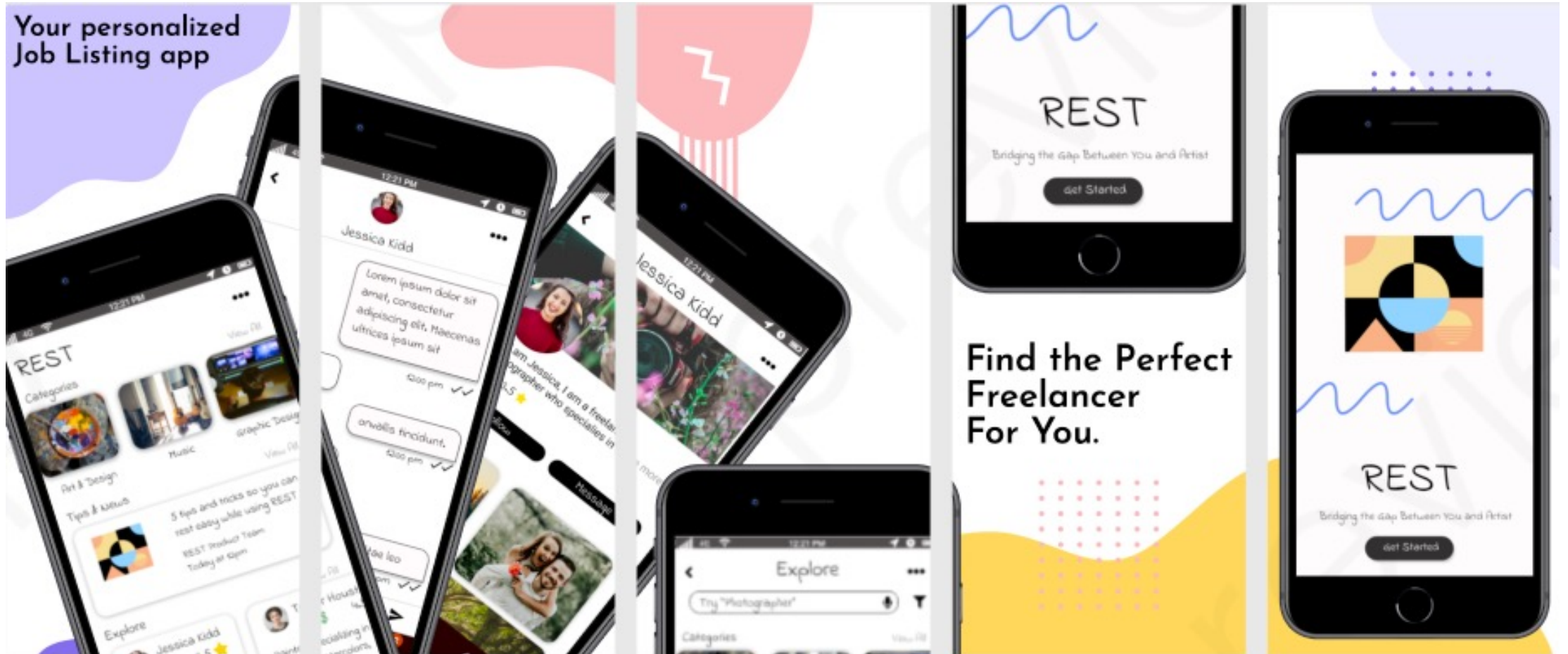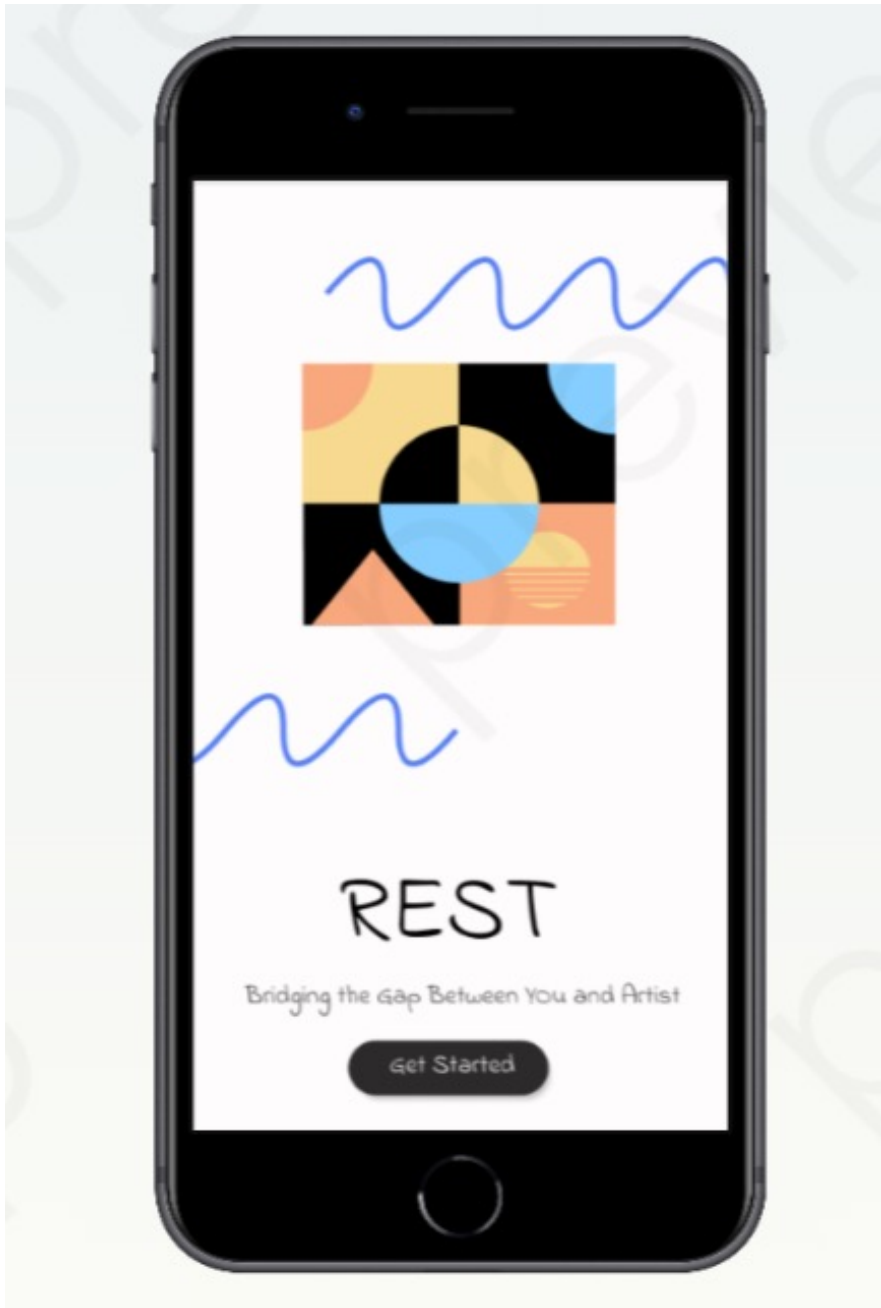## Finding Talent Made Simple

This product was designed to be a platform to help freelancers in the creative industries better engage with clients in turn finding more opportunities to showcase talents and build clientele.

The Goal

Build a platform for these job seekers to showcase their talents. A platform that is trusted, welcoming, and connecting.

The Problem

With the rise of Covid-19, freelancing has become ever more enticing . So much so that now around 36% of the US workforce identify as freelancers. By 2028 the number of freelancers is expected to increase by 30 million individuals. Many well-known platforms today lack the intuitive and welcoming design needed to attract and retain users.

The Outcome

To grow Rest's online platform, I designed an application that reflects the goals and needs of the user. As a result, I created an experience that was as enjoyable and attractive as an in-person one, making it easy to promote skills and/or hire freelancers.
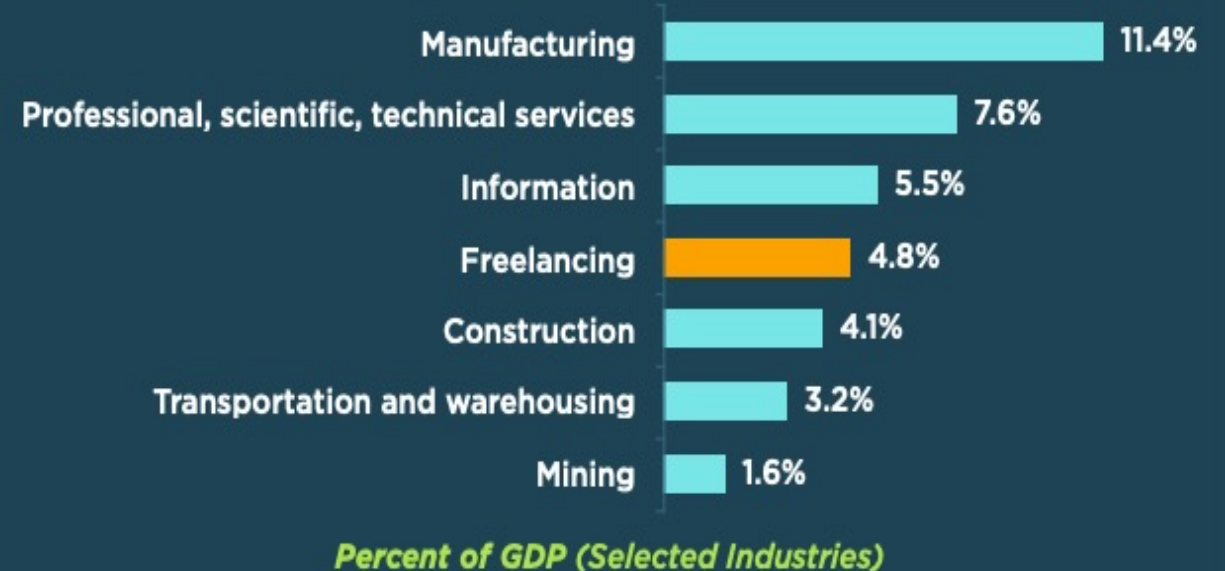
My Role

Lead UX Designer, Branding, and UI Design

Responsibilities

I was the sole individual working on this conceptual project. I was responsible for all aspects of the design, from conducting user interviews, creating low and high-fidelity prototypes, and reiterating on designs based on feedback.

Methods Used

Competitive Research, Secondary Research, User Interviews, Affinity Map, Card Sorting, User Persona, User Flow, Problem Statement, Sketching, Usability Testing

Tools Used

Figma, Zoom, Previewed, Invision, and Experte

Understanding the User

I conducted interviews, created empathy maps, and utilized personas to understand the needs of the users I am designing for. The two primary user groups identified through research were freelancers looking for odd jobs or to build a larger clientele. The second being clients looking for professionals to fulfill defined assignments.

Empathize

Define

Ideate

Prototype

Test
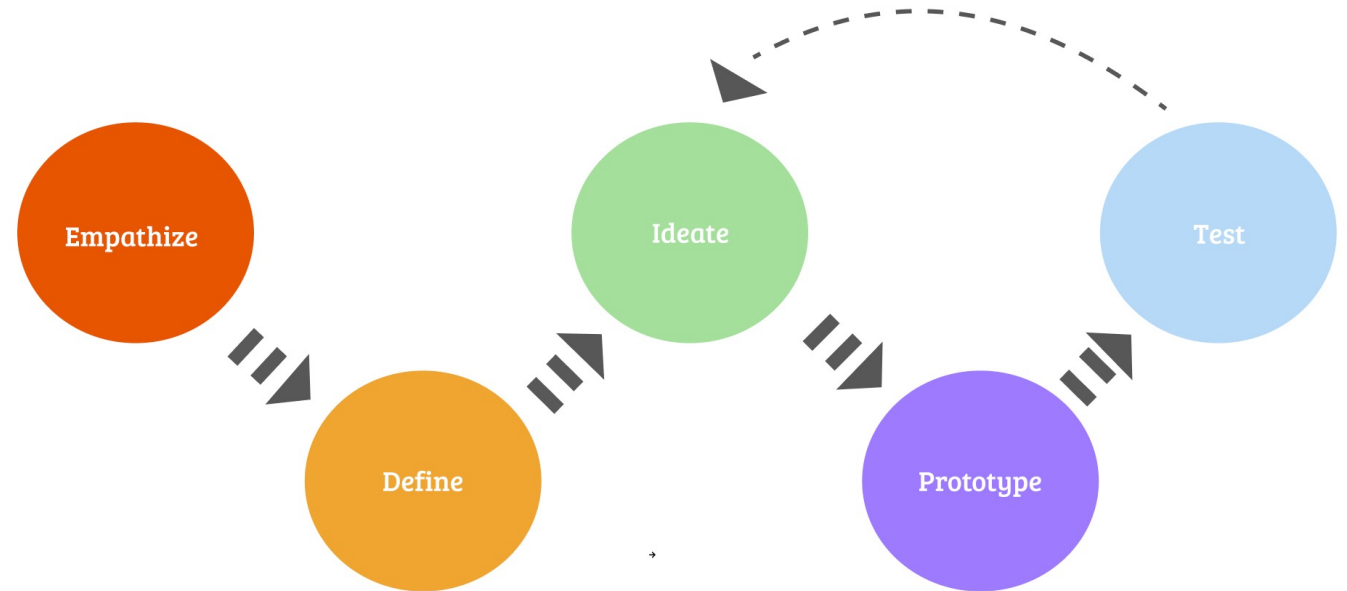
Pain Points

😒 **Many individuals do not have the time to scour the web for freelancers/clients**

😖 **Many individuals find it difficult to trust someone's abilities without being able to see previous work/experience**

😡 **Many platforms in use today are filled with spam and malicious postings**

Competitive Audit

While conducting this competitive audit I discovered the various competitors and the features users expect.

- All the competing products that I analyzed have apps as well as web platforms.

- All allow for users to create profiles, in doing so building trust.

- Almost all have found a specific niche and tailor to a unique audience.

	Fiverr.com	Linkedin.com	Freelancer.com	Flexjobs.com	Thumbtrack.com	Upwork.com
Direct or Indirect	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Direct	Indirect	Direct
Target Audience	Individuals who work in various business functions	Employees,Influencers, decision makers, and executives	Individuals looking for feelancers/jobs	Individuals looking for feelancers/jobs	Freelancers/clients dealing with home maintaince	individuals looking to fund projects and products
Post Job	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Find Job	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unique Value Proposition	Connects businesses straight to freelancers	Profiles for users to showcase previous and current work experience	Team of advisors to help freelancers get hired	Platform for both remote and freelance positions	Tailored to home maintanence	Payment protection
Cost	Paid Service	Free to use	Free to use	Paid Service	Free to use	Paid Service
Mobile Application	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
User Profile	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Accessiblity	96/100	100/100	90/100	87/100	83/100	95/100
User Flow	Pass	Pass	Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass
Strengths	Simple to price and package services	Unique product and Strong Social Media Presence	Contest for increased earnings	Ad-free and Scam-free also offers career coaching	Understands their target user and how to market to them.	Opportunites for both beginners and experts.

Personas

After spending some time getting to better understand my users, I was able to create personas that embodied the needs and desires of Rest's users.

- This insight revealed that many of Rest's users need a way to promote and showcase their skills and talents.

- This persona also communicated the desire to have a cost-free platform.
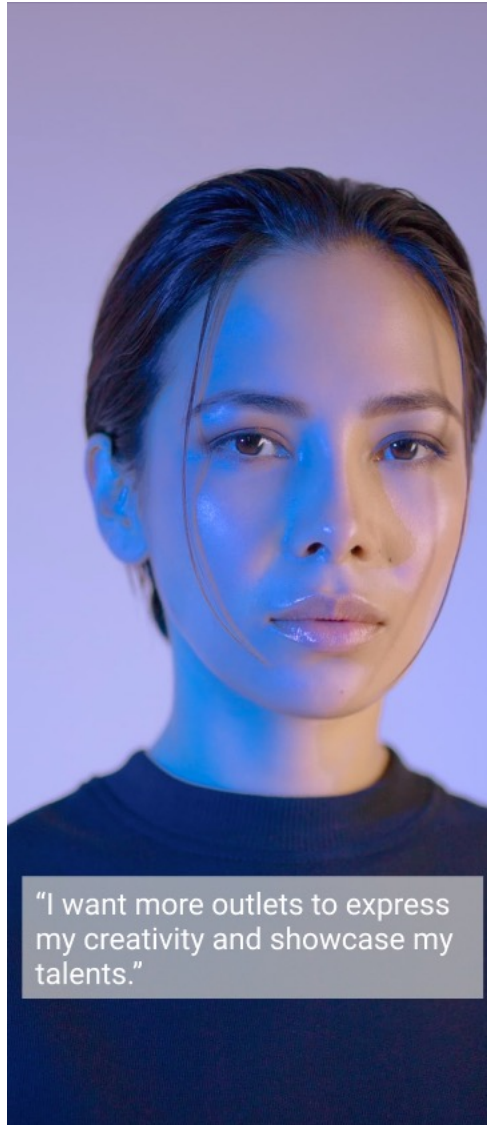
Jane Goodman

- 28
- Sydney
- Graphic Designer
- Bachelors of Art

Favorite Brands

Bio

Jane is a Graphic Designer based in Sydney Australia. She currently works at a small tech company. Due to the company's size Jane doesnt earn as much as she would like to. In her free time Jane enjoys working on side projects for friends becasue it allows her to express her creativity.

"I want more outlets to express my creativity and showcase my talents."

Wants and Needs

- Way to Promote her talents to land more clients.

- Ability to freelance while continung at her 9-5.

Frustrations

- Many of the platforms available are too formal.

- Many popular platforms charges Freelancers when they sign up.

- Too many spam/ fake job postings.

Personas

With the use of this persona, I was able to understand that:

- Users need a way of verifying the skills freelancers proclaim to have.

- Clients need freelancers for multiple roles/ tasks.

"I need talent I can trust, so I can ensure my business is successful as possible."

Mark Sommer

- 46
- Seattle
- Self-employed
- Bachelors of Science

Favorite Brands

Bio

Mark is a small business owner located in Seattle Washington. Although his business is gaining traction, Mark's company does not make enough to hire full-time employees. In the past he has hired freelancers, but has been disappointed with the final product. As his business grows he will be looking for individuals to bring on fulltime.

Wants and Needs

- Wants to continue growing the company he has created.

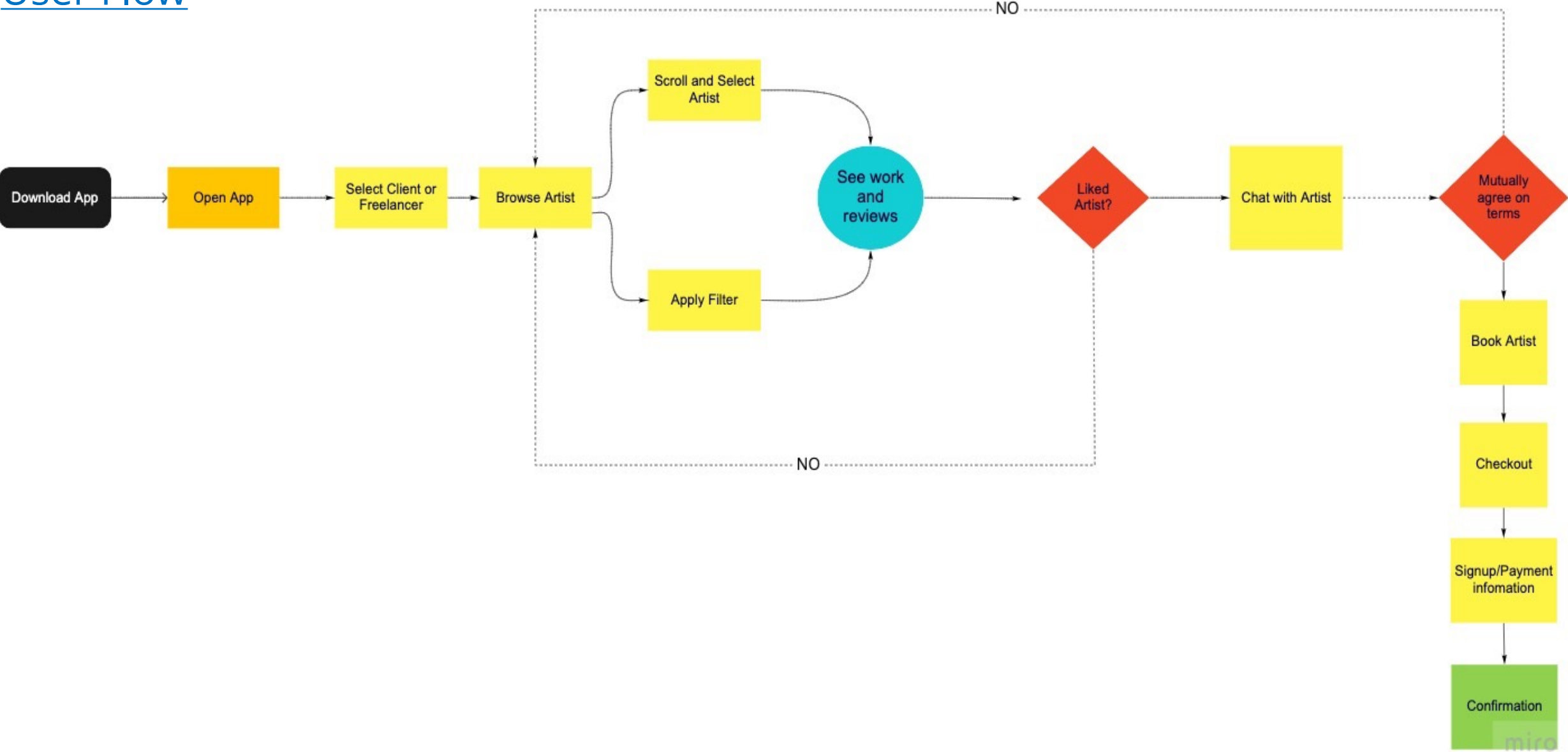- Needs reliable freelancers who deliver high level products.

Frustrations

- The platforms he has utilized have not produced the desired products.

- Wishes he could easily view rankings, previous experiences, and education.

- Believes the market is over saturated with bad freelancers

User Flow

Paper Sketches

From the beginning, I knew I wanted an app that was intuitive and effortless to navigate. I knew having curated job postings would give users an easy and enjoyable way to browse opportunities. Next, having a filter that allowed the user to distinguish whether they were a freelancer or potential client helped the user complete their ultimate-goal faster. Lastly, by including a user profile that highlighted the average rate, ranking, and previous experience, users would feel more confident hiring these individuals.
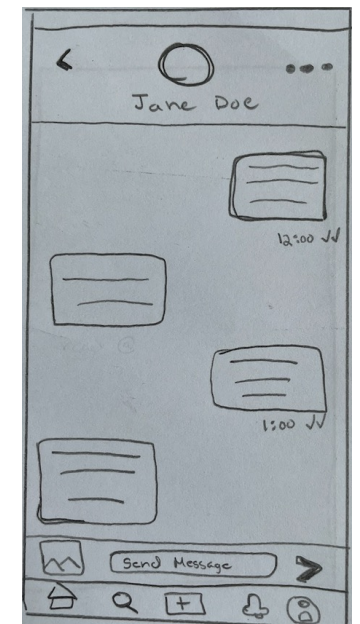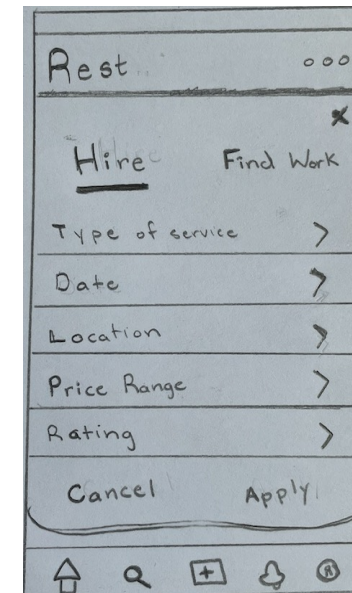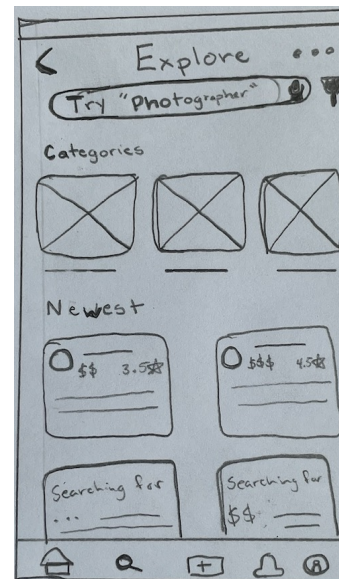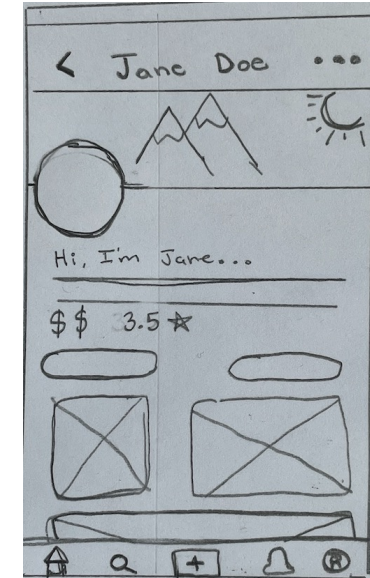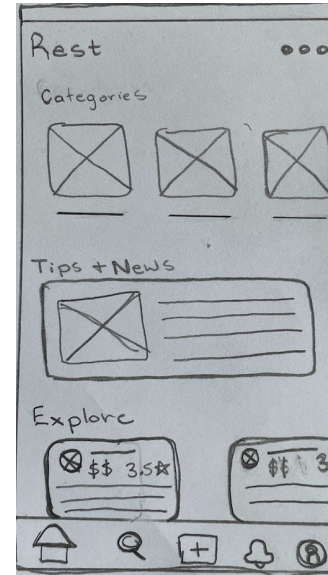
High Fidelity Prototype

- This design features a new font that is simple, easy to read, and more accessible overall.

- The user flow has also been adjusted to better reflect the flow my users will take, not that of the designer.

- I took away most of the color that had been used to help limit distractions and help my users complete their tasks.

View Prototype
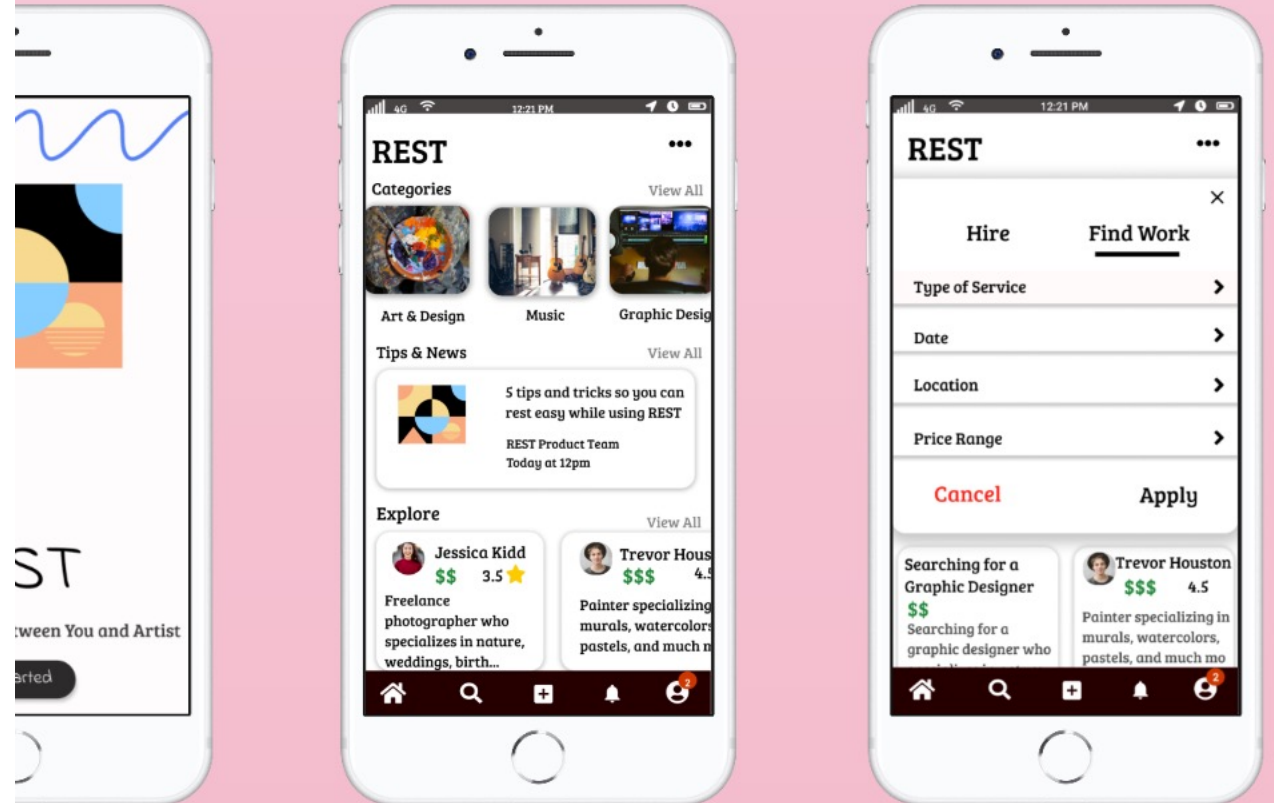
Key Takeaways

In the process of designing this app, I went through multiple rounds of iteration. During which I was introduced to ideas that were conflicting with what I believed would make a usable, enjoyable, and desirable product. Many of these ideas dealt with the apps overall design. After implementation and further testing. I believe I was able to design a product that met the users needs and was accessible to everyone. These changes included use of different font style, changes to the overall user flow, and use of less color.

My original font, Indie Flower, is a clean simple font. The main drawback is that it is very thin and can be difficult to read at smaller font sizes. I have since changed it to Bree Serif, a font that is still simple yet bold enough to be visible on different screens.

In the beginning my user flow was not very intuitive for my users, as it was designed from my perspective. What may have been obvious to me was not for my users.

Finally, in my original design I used too many colors. These colors were complementary of one another, but my implementation made it distracting to my users. I decided for a more minimalist approach with color and only use it where it fit or was crucial to help my users complete their tasks.